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Chairman: Mr. Suazo ..... (Honduras)
later: Mr. Benmellouk (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Morocco)

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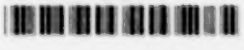

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Al-Khajah** (United Arab Emirates) said that economic security was essential for achieving political stability in the world. A comprehensive economic strategy should take into consideration the great economic disparities existing between developing and developed countries. The advanced countries must abide by the commitments made at the Fourth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization and at the International Conference on Financing for Development, offering trade facilities and setting up a new multilateral international trade system that would encourage openness, fairness and non-discrimination.

2. Abject poverty had not declined sensibly during the past ten years, and up to 300 million people were still starving and suffering from malnutrition and illnesses such as malaria, tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS, owing to the lack of medication, clean water, good sanitary conditions and education.

3. Improving the livelihood of the developing countries would prevent civil and regional wars in the present and in the future. The international community, particularly the developed countries, should be responsible for helping the developing countries to eliminate poverty and implement economic development plans. In that regard, the United Arab Emirates recommended reducing the debt burdens of developing countries, as advocated in the G-8 Debt Initiative, and facilitating the transfer of modern information technology to those countries, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

4. His Government had joined the World Trade Organization, hoping that international trade liberalization and the elimination of obstacles to equitable trade would be effectively pursued by that Organization. It had also acceded to regional conventions concerning trade and economic cooperation, such as the Arab Free Trade Zone Convention. It supported the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, and of Monterrey regarding north-south cooperation and sustainable development. It provided financial assistance to many developing countries in Asia and Africa, and to those countries that had suffered from natural disasters or from the consequences of war, such as Afghanistan, Kosovo and Palestine. With regard to the latter, US$ 27 million were donated for the rebuilding of Jenin camp, and for the rebuilding of destroyed schools, hospitals, homes and holy places.

5. His country's development policy promoted human resources and affirmed the equality of men and women in the fields of education, work, human rights and national duties. The Government promulgated laws designed to modernize and develop educational, health and cultural institutions, while providing protection for mothers, children, young and old people, and the handicapped. It helped also to introduce the most advanced information technologies in the public and private sectors, and sought to make them available for everyone.

6. Cities and villages in the United Arab Emirates were built in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, thus ensuring environmental protection, biodiversity and a mix of economic and industrial activities.

7. His Government viewed the economic situation in the occupied Arab territories, whether Palestinian or Syrian, with great concern. The Israeli occupation forces were destroying agricultural lands, seizing water resources, preventing Palestinians from moving freely and shutting down cities, leading to a severe deterioration in the economic and human conditions of the inhabitants. Those actions were a blatant violation of international law and of the Fourth Geneva Convention, and the international community should compel Israel to stop them immediately and to abide by the relevant international resolutions, which recognized the permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people over the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab inhabitants of the occupied Golan over their natural resources.

8. He expressed the hope that effective solutions to the international economic problems would be found and that a new and just world economic order would be created that would achieve prosperity for all people in the world.

9. **Mr. Acosta Bonilla** (Honduras) said that the international community must honour the commitments it had made at the Millennium Summit, which had been reiterated at the Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg conferences, to ensure sustainable development and eradicate poverty, a scourge that afflicted the bulk of

humanity. Moreover, unbridled globalization did not result in evenly distributed economic benefits and growth and even marginalized the poorest countries. The international community must assist the latter when they faced economic difficulties arising from the unfair global trading system. Noting that his country's external policy was based on democracy, good governance, solidarity and international cooperation, he said that efforts were being made to improve and modernize the functioning of State institutions and to promote the integration of the rural sector. His Government wanted a world that was fairer for all, expanded prospects for cooperation, addressed the problem of the external debt and fostered free trade based on equity.

10. **Mr. Husain** (Observer for the Organization of the Islamic Conference) said that the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) keenly observed and participated in the deliberations of the Second Committee, which addressed issues of concern to all its members: macroeconomic policy questions; sustainable development and international economic cooperation; the environment; migration; operational activities for development; and permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

11. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Chairman of the Group of 77 had already reminded the Committee that the current unfavourable economic situation was creating immense difficulties for the least developed and middle-income countries. Since most OIC member States and observer States were in one of those two categories, his Organization's interest in seeking speedy solutions to the aforementioned predicaments was immense. The advocacy of the World Bank for doubling development assistance, more effective utilization of existing and new resources, and centralized and comprehensive strategies on poverty reduction went in the right direction. He hoped that the need for improvements in technological and higher education, infrastructure, tourism and the transport and communication sector would not be ignored, as they also addressed the problems of the poor by opening up employment and small-scale entrepreneurial opportunities, allowing market access for agricultural produce and, in general, narrowing the socio-economic gap between the poor and the rich.

12. It was important not to ignore the root causes of the world's social and economic ills, such as underdevelopment, treacherous foreign occupations, debilitating conditionalities, inequitable trading patterns and other harmful practices. The Committee should place due emphasis on the economic and social situations which drove human minds towards desperate measures out of sheer hopelessness. Those causes needed to be identified, contained and appropriately remedied by resolute national and international actions. OIC would keenly observe the deliberations of the Committee on those above and other related issues. The common goals of the international community should be to work together to facilitate mankind's journey towards the peace and prosperity of that global village which remained the ultimate destination in the new millennium.

13. **Mr. Bhagwat-Singh** (International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources) said that the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) had been active over the past 12 months in the preparation of and participation in the World Summit on Sustainable Development, seeking to galvanize the environmental community in preparation for the Summit. IUCN had been represented at the highest level in the preparatory committee process and the Summit itself, sponsoring or participating in numerous side events, and organizing an Environment Centre as a focal area for discussion of the issues of sustainable development.

14. In the field, IUCN had continued to develop its programme of capacity-building and demonstrations for environmentally sustainable development, focusing on issues such as water resources, forests and biodiversity. IUCN would introduce its full report on its activities in support of the work of the United Nations to coincide with the discussion of environment and sustainable development in the Committee. It would continue in the coming year to devote its full capacities to that area as a committed and responsive partner in the work of the United Nations.

15. He drew attention to the Fifth World Parks Congress to be held in Durban, South Africa, in 2003. He was confident that the location of the Congress would play a large part in its success.

16. **Ms. Chenoweth** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that, despite the fact that the right to food was recognized directly or indirectly by all countries in the world, hunger continued to cause widespread suffering. Poverty was one of the causes of hunger but it was also a consequence of it. Overall growth was also compromised in societies where hunger was widespread, and its alleviation was a precondition for sustainable poverty reduction.

17. The HIV/AIDS pandemic was perceived by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as a problem of critical importance for development in general, rather than simply a health issue. There was increasing evidence that HIV/AIDS intensified existing labour bottlenecks in agriculture, increased widespread malnutrition, and added to the problems of rural women, particularly in female-headed households and especially in Africa.

18. The FAO annual report entitled "The State of Food and Agriculture" provided an overview of the current situation and highlighted some of the major challenges faced in eliminating world hunger and poverty and ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources, focusing on the centrality of food, agriculture and rural development for poverty alleviation and the eradication of hunger.

19. Since the World Food Summit in Rome in 1996, although 70 per cent of the poor depended directly on agriculture for their livelihood, neither developed nor developing countries had assigned adequate priority to hunger reduction through agricultural and rural development. The Summit had helped to flag the lack of political will and financial commitments to reduce hunger. The Declaration adopted at the Summit should catalyse new and innovative ways to get back on track in order to halve hunger by 2015. FAO, which was working towards the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in collaboration with several working groups and task forces on hunger, biodiversity and trade believed that the annual benefits of halving the number of hungry by 2015 would amount to $120 billion.

20. FAO had strengthened its programme of technical assistance aimed at enhancing capacity-building in developing countries. For the follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development, FAO had presented a joint paper with the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the World Food Programme (WFP), underlining the importance of investment in agriculture in rural areas. The Anti-Hunger Programme introduced by FAO at the Johannesburg Summit contained priorities for incremental public investment to achieve its target for 2015. Total annual costs were on the order of $24 billion, which represented roughly 5 cents for every $100 earned in developed countries or 2.5 per cent of OECD support to agriculture in 2001.

21. At the third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, FAO had proposed a food safety facility to help the least developed countries build capacity in that area. FAO had assisted in the preparation of a comprehensive agricultural development programme, endorsed by African Ministers of Agriculture in Rome in June 2002. At the recent debate in the General Assembly devoted to the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), there had been numerous references to the critical importance of agriculture and rural development, hunger, malnutrition, food security, and market access for agricultural products from developing countries. That was a very good sign in the common fight against hunger.

22. **Mr. Alsaidi** (Yemen) said that growth must be the cornerstone of international trade and economic activities and that it should be achieved fairly and justly. Following past international meetings on multilateral cooperation, the WTO Ministerial Meeting at Doha on international trade, the Monterrey International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, the time had come for implementation. Resources must be mobilized in order to eliminate poverty and realize sustainable economic development, while reducing the rate of poverty by half in 2015, in accordance with the Millennium Declaration.

23. The Government of Yemen had a strategy for reducing poverty in the country between 2003 and 2005, which mobilized the different sectors of civil society, such as women's associations, professional unions and academic and political circles, along with the relevant United Nations offices and funds. That combined public and private endeavour was in accord with the governmental plan to reinforce pluralism and democracy in the administration of the country. The Government considered such broad popular

participation to be a basis for successful sustainable development.

24. Similar cooperative strategies should be pursued at the regional and international levels. Developing countries should take an effective part in drafting international economic strategies, as real partners of the industrial countries, on the basis of justice, mutual interests and wise decision-making. Those strategies ought to be accepted by all members of society. The developing countries' external debts represented a burden that ought to be eliminated in order to allow those countries to pursue unshackled their development objectives.

25. The Johannesburg Summit had demonstrated the need to fight pollution and to realize sustainable development. That required the mobilization of resources and the adoption of creative methods for executing the programme, necessitating follow-up assessments. There was thus an unprecedented need to adopt implementation procedures tied to specific deadlines.

26. The Doha resolutions should lead to greater participation by developing countries in international trade activities. Developed countries ought to lift their protectionist barriers in order to allow the developing countries' products access to international markets. Agricultural subsidies did not help international trade and caused great damage to developing countries. In order to enable the developing countries, especially the least developed ones, to join the World Trade Organization, their ability to negotiate must be reinforced, and there should be a grace period during which many of the membership conditions would be lifted.

27. He expressed support for the pioneering role of the United Nations in strengthening multilateral economic and social cooperation, admitting the importance of such an endeavour in the growth of developing countries, and encouraging the internal reforms within the Organization that would help international prosperity, stability, security and peace.

28. **Mr. Nakkari** (Syrian Arab Republic) stated that the poorest countries were being increasingly marginalized in the world economy, and that the international conferences held in Doha, Monterrey and Johannesburg represented an international economic hope that needed to be concretized.

29. His delegation supported the Millennium Declaration and believed that it was time to implement what had been resolved, through follow-up mechanisms to monitor the implementation of all international resolutions, agreements and declarations.

30. Many challenges were facing the world, such as poverty, disease, water shortages, desertification, environmental problems, reduction in development assistance, protectionist measures by developed countries, export subsidies, debt problems, and the increasing technological gap between developed and developing countries. These challenges represented a greater collective responsibility within an increasingly globalized world.

31. Globalization led to economic difficulties for the developing countries and there was therefore a need to create a just world economic order that allowed all countries to participate in and benefit from that globalization process. Given that economic development and poverty elimination were the priorities of the developing countries, such an economic order meant that the developed countries ought to increase their official development aid, transfer technology to the developing countries, abandon protectionist policies, and open their markets to developing countries' goods.

32. The programme of the World Trade Organization should include the needs of developing countries, the executive capacity of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should be reinforced, developed countries should eliminate their protectionist policies, the resolutions of the Johannesburg Summit should be implemented, and financing for development should be provided in accordance with the Monterrey Consensus.

33. His delegation supported the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), full application of the resolutions adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, especially with regard to trade, mobilization of financial resources and requirements for landlocked countries. It looked forward to the International Ministerial Meeting on Transit Transport Cooperation in 2003.

34. The Johannesburg Summit had confirmed that foreign occupation represented a blatant threat to sustainable development, and that the continuation of the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian lands seized in

1967, including Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, undermined the international cooperation everyone was striving to attain. It was not possible to achieve peace, growth and prosperity in the region if the continued Israeli violation of international law and resolution and of the Fourth Geneva Convention was ignored.

35. **Mr. Ahmad** (Iraq) said that economic cooperation, globalization and trade liberalization were among the difficulties that developing countries would face in order to adapt to the new economic environment. Globalization led to the marginalization of the majority of developing countries. It would be necessary to eliminate gradually the obstacles and the constraints imposed on the free movement of goods, services and technology and to take into account the particularities of the developing countries' economies.

36. The gap between the southern and northern hemispheres represented a major challenge to the international community, following the cold war. It was important to prevent the marginalization of the developing countries and ensure their participation in the world economy. Economic policies should not be used as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries, in violation of United Nations objectives, principles and development objectives. That would cause long-term damage to the productive capacity of the targeted country and to neighbouring countries that had commercial ties with it.

37. The economic embargo imposed on Iraq since 1990 represented the main challenge to the sustainable development of that country. It had destroyed the Iraqi economic infrastructure, employment and society and led to the death of more than 1.7 million people, mostly women and children. The embargo damaged the components of sustainable development, in particular the environment, as it was accompanied by military aggression and use of internationally prohibited substances, such as depleted uranium.

38. Sustainable development was the result not only of the availability of food, medication and the satisfaction of basic human needs, but also of freedom from political and economic impediments. The Government of Iraq had put in place comprehensive development plans since 1968, which raised the standards of living of the population and improved the environment and investment opportunities. However, the penalties imposed on the country had led to a substantial decrease in gross national product. Many products, services and spare parts were not reaching Iraq, causing the strangulation of its economy. Those inhumane sanctions were destroying the Iraqi economy and Iraqi people, and represented a continuous violation of the United Nations Charter and of human rights. The time had come for the Second Committee to study the economic and social effects of the embargo on Iraq and the surrounding countries, and to adopt the necessary measures in that regard.

39. **Mr. Mumbey-Wafula** (Uganda), having associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, stressed that the time had come to implement the outcomes of recent major conferences. The African countries, through the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), had developed a home-grown initiative centred on multi-sectoral programmes to deal with the continent's key challenges. The Second Committee should follow that example and focus on follow-up and implementation of commitments made. He supported, for example, the proposal to establish an integrated and coordinated follow-up mechanism to review and monitor implementation of the results of United Nations conferences in the economic and social fields as a mechanism for ensuring efficient and effective implementation and review of conference outcomes and called for allocation of adequate resources to that process.

40. Debt relief for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) remained a priority and he called for a substantial increase in the financial resources allocated to that end and for linking of the debt relief process with access to developed country markets for the exports of least developed and other developing countries in order to facilitate poverty eradication and development. Development partners should honour their commitment to provide 0.7 per cent of GNP in official development assistance, in particular for areas such as infrastructure and human resources development. Increased investment and trade, including foreign direct investment, would also remain crucial for developing economies.

41. He welcomed the establishment of the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Countries and Small Island Developing States and called for that Office to be provided with adequate resources, while emphasizing

the critical role of the Organization in supporting such programmes. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) played an important role in supporting developing countries in the areas of trade, investment, technology and enterprise development and he noted that General Assembly resolution 56/227 had called for strengthening of UNCTAD. He also urged the international community to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), in particular in light of the dismal performance of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF).

42. **Mr. Mejdoub** (Tunisia), having associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said recent major conferences had provided the international community with an opportunity to renew its commitment to the millennium development goals, poverty reduction and fair sharing of the benefits of globalization, in particular for the South countries. The time had therefore come to create a true partnership for development.

43. The Monterrey Conference had stressed the importance of an integrated approach to development, while the Johannesburg Summit had renewed the commitment to Agenda 21 based on the principle of shared but differentiated responsibilities. The latter's programme of action, while not perfect, had raised awareness of the threat posed by poverty, unsustainable means of production and consumption, loss of natural resources, deterioration of land, desertification and shrinking forests. He welcomed renewed commitments in the areas of access to clean water and sanitation, agriculture, renewable energy, biodiversity and implementation of the United Nations Convention on Desertification as well as a funding mechanism for the latter. He looked forward to the forthcoming Assembly of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which was expected to designate desertification and deforestation as priority issues.

44. The gap between the developed and developing countries was growing, and it was urgent that those groups of countries assumed their respective responsibilities, the former by increasing support and assistance and the latter by mobilizing resources to promote economic growth. Africa in particular had specific needs, linked essentially to economic and social problems. For that reason, Africans themselves had established the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to meet their sustainable development needs with their own resources. He noted in that context the favourable response of the developed countries to that initiative and their promises of support.

45. Poverty remained a major obstacle to human development and economic progress and he therefore welcomed the creation of the World Solidarity Fund, a symbol of the new awareness of the interdependence of the interests of nations. He looked forward to seeing the Fund's operational mechanisms finalized during the current session.

46. Given the growing digital divide between the industrialized and developing countries, steps must be taken to allow all countries, in particular the South countries, to take full advantage of new technologies. He looked forward to the two forthcoming sessions of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in 2003 and 2005 in Geneva and Tunis, respectively, which should propose methods to harness information and communications technologies for development and thereby contribute to poverty eradication.

47. **Mr. Savchuk** (Ukraine) said that the ongoing deliberations on sustainable development issues had forged a consensus on the importance of sound economic policy and good governance at the national level, as rare elements of integration into the world economy. At the same time, it was clear that national efforts alone were not sufficient for attainment of the goals of the Millennium Declaration. Globalization had substantially increased the dependence of national economies on the external environment, and broad-based international cooperation to ensure full involvement by the transition economies in the global economy should be further sustained and energized. An open and equitable international trade regime, a stable and efficient financial architecture, a strengthened multilateral trading system through increased World Trade Organization membership and elimination of protectionist barriers were essential to the development of the transition economies. He was confident that consideration at the current session of the General Assembly of the integration of those countries into the world economy would give new impetus to the continuing efforts of the international community aimed at assisting those countries in ensuring sustained economic growth and resolving their urgent environmental problems; that in turn would lead to a

more stable, wealthy and equitable economic environment.

48. Globalization and liberalization generated new opportunities for economic development, while at the same time entailing risks of marginalization for many countries, especially the transition economies. Most of the latter had removed restrictions on capital flows in order to integrate more fully into the global economy and obtain access to international finances. Access had certainly improved, but mainly at the cost of greater volatility and instability. Risks for the transition economies were substantially greater than for industrialized countries, owing to the scarcity and underdevelopment of their resources. The international community must address the key problem of how to manage globalization, so that the immense opportunities it offered were translated into universal prosperity. The universality and comprehensive mandate of the United Nations made it a unique forum for consensus-building in that sphere, but it had failed to provide strong leadership on microeconomic policy. The Organization should strengthen its capacity to provide economic advice in order to help the countries concerned to avoid the risk of marginalization and underdevelopment.

49. The two milestone conferences held during the current year had produced a new development paradigm and shifted the focus from mere economic cooperation to multilateralism. The outcome documents of the Johannesburg Summit were important instruments containing pragmatic and concrete guidance which could be used to improve living standards and social conditions, for the protection of the environment, and for ensuring economic progress for all nations. Unfortunately, efforts to implement the objectives agreed on 10 years earlier had been insufficient and negative tendencies had grown stronger. Pollution, poverty, violence, social instability and political conflicts were interwoven in a vicious circle from which it was difficult to escape.

50. His delegation welcomed the strengthening of commitments to assist developing countries and transition economies in their efforts towards sustainable development. Innovative mechanisms should be created to address the debt problems of the developing and transition economies; one such mechanism had been proposed by the President of Ukraine at the Johannesburg Summit and reflected in the Plan of Implementation as debt for sustainable development swaps. That constructive and realistic measure would have a positive economic and ecological impact. He welcomed the adoption of the Monterrey Consensus as an important step in addressing the key problem of ensuring the sustainability of human development and long-term financial resources.

51. Although the global economy was still generally considered to be in a weak state, analysis of recent global economic developments suggested, remarkably, that the transition economies were performing well; their rate of GDP increase made them one of the fastest growing regions in the world. The economic situation in Ukraine had shown clear signs of microeconomic stabilization and increase in industrial output; it was currently in its third consecutive year of positive growth. The economy had begun to undergo extensive restructuring that had led to large productivity gains and considerable inflows of foreign direct investment. Sustained efforts were being made to create favourable monetary and financial conditions to enable further progress. Among the leading engines of economic growth in Ukraine was export expansion supported by an increase in private consumption and domestic investment. Through the restructuring of external debt, more funds had been made available for both external and internal financing.

52. *Mr. Benmellouk (Morocco), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

53. **Ms. Msuya** (United Republic of Tanzania), having associated herself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the momentum created by the commitments to sustainable development made by Governments at recent major conferences and summits must be maintained. The developed countries should, for example, enhance cooperation and share scientific and technological advances with the developing countries in order to improve their standard of living and contribute to poverty eradication.

54. She welcomed the Enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, which her country had used to improve social services and reduce poverty. Servicing of the debt burden remained a problem, however, and debt stock must be reduced to sustainable levels. She expressed concern that official development assistance to some heavily indebted poor countries had

fallen and stressed that the HIPC initiative and official development assistance were mutually reinforcing.

55. Many laudable commitments had been made; unfortunately, pledges to meet those commitments fell far short of expectations. She commended those countries which had met the target of 0.7 per cent official development assistance and welcomed the commitments by the G-8 and the European Union to significantly increase such assistance. Pledged resources should be made available in a timely manner in order to permit enhanced and predictable funding for sustainable development.

56. Increased foreign direct investment, improved market access and terms of trade, elimination of agricultural subsidies in industrialized countries and transfer of appropriate technologies would contribute to efforts to halve extreme poverty by 2015. With a concerted effort on the part of all stakeholders, her delegation was convinced that the millennium development goals could be achieved, poverty could be eradicated and sustainable development could be ensured.

57. In an interdependent world, new partnerships were necessary. While the developed countries must support the developing countries, South-South cooperation was likewise vital for poverty eradication and sustained growth. The priorities had been agreed upon, the targets had been set and the commitments had been made and it was therefore urgent to devise programmes for implementation.

58. **Mr. Penjor** (Bhutan) associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Development needs had been discussed at length at recent meetings and conferences and there was a growing awareness that an inclusive, equitable and sustainable new world economic order was necessary to guarantee peace and stability and that in an interdependent world countries must cooperate to ensure sustainable development for all. He was concerned, however, that the level of political and financial commitment was adequate. Differences over the outcome of the Johannesburg Conference and lack of progress in crucial areas in the World Trade Organization negotiations showed that many questions remained regarding commitments which had, in principle, been agreed to.

59. The Second Committee must ensure that such programmes of action and commitments were translated into tangible results. The Brussels and Barbados Programmes of Action must be implemented and, in that context, he noted the important role played by the Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Countries and Small Island Developing States and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and called for allocation of adequate resources to those bodies. He also called on the international community and stakeholders to support the International Ministerial Meeting on Transit Transport Cooperation in its efforts to address the specific needs of the landlocked countries.

60. **Mr. Win Mra** (Myanmar) expressed some doubts as to world economic recovery, not only as a result of the slow recovery in the United States and the continued economic slowdown in Japan, but also because of political instability in the Middle East, which was bound to put pressure on oil prices, and the major setbacks in the world financial sector caused by the collapse of huge corporations. Moreover, the balance of payments deficit in the United States currently stood at about 4 per cent of GDP. Together with the economic slowdown, the global flow of foreign direct investment, one of the main sources of capital inflows to developing countries, had declined sharply in 2001 by 14 per cent. The share of FDI to the 49 least developed countries had dropped to a mere 0.5 per cent of the global total. In the face of such vulnerability, developing countries should strengthen their position by embracing South-South cooperation and further strengthening regional integration. He welcomed the strengthening of international cooperation, particularly the Monterrey Consensus, which had ushered in a new partnership between developed and developing countries based on mutual responsibility and accountability. However, his delegation was concerned over the level of ODA flows, which was significantly below the agreed level of 0.7 per cent of the GDP of developed countries. He welcomed NEPAD, which provided a historic opportunity for Africa to overcome its obstacles to development and would serve as an engine for combating poverty, fostering sound economic management and consolidating democracy throughout the continent. In that regard, his delegation was encouraged by the promise to make available significant resources to Africa.

61. Stressing that trade must be a source of economic growth and poverty reduction, he noted that the new round of WTO trade negotiations must ensure an open, rule-based transparent non-discriminatory and predictable multilateral trading system. One of the greatest obstacles to such a system was the heavily regulated world market for agricultural goods. Indeed, industrialized countries were spending more than $300 billion a year on agricultural subsidies, because of which exports from developing countries could not enter the markets of developed countries, where consumers paid higher prices for agricultural commodities. It should be noted, moreover, that the amount spent on such subsidies was far greater than the total amount of ODA.

62. Faster economic growth should be the major driving force behind efforts to alleviate poverty. Turning to the situation in his country, he noted that his Government gave top priority to poverty alleviation and rural development, especially since 80 per cent of the population was rural. The drive to integrate ethnic nationalities, most of which lived in remote border areas, into the mainstream of the national economy, would effectively reduce the illicit production of and trafficking in drugs. Higher economic growth was necessary to improve the standard of living of the population and his Government had accordingly paid particular attention to achieving higher growth through the adoption of short-term economic plans.

63. **Mr. D'Alotto** (Argentina) said that it was absolutely essential to implement the consensus reached at Monterrey that access to markets was key to the efforts of developing countries to eradicate poverty and make progress in the economic and social spheres. In that regard, protectionist measures in the North, particularly agricultural subsidies, must be eliminated if developing countries were to reap the full benefits of globalization.

64. Indeed, in 2000, the countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development had spent $350 billion on agricultural subsidies, seven times more than they spent annually on ODA. The elimination of those agricultural subsidies would lead to a 1 per cent increase in Argentina's GDP, create jobs and generate the foreign exchange required to pay off some of the country's debts. That was why it was absolutely imperative to have free trade in the goods of developing countries so that those countries would no longer have to seek ad hoc assistance, creating a vicious circle that left them trapped with unsustainable debt burdens.

65. Argentina was emerging from an exceptionally deep crisis. The three pillars of its economic programme were fiscal austerity, caution in monetary matters and opening up to external markets. The State must not spend more than its revenues. Accordingly, a fiscal reform was being undertaken among other things to reduce the high levels of tax evasion and ensure improved linkage between the federal government and the provinces. On the external front, Argentina would continue to be a member of the concert of nations and to participate actively in multilateral negotiations within the framework of the World Trade Organization and would develop a new trade policy to make its economy an export-oriented one, ensuring that sales to the rest of the world would generate foreign exchange. Indeed, only through genuine export growth and international trade could Argentina achieve sustainable development and begin to meet its foreign debt obligations, which had gone unpaid for nine months. At great social cost, his Government had thus far paid $3.5 billion to international lending institutions. The fact that Argentina had made those payments during the worst economic period in its history demonstrated how committed it was to meeting the requirements of the multilateral lending agencies. Noting, among other things, that the international financial system still lacked a coherent and realistic international strategy to deal with financial instability and the debt sustainability of developing countries, he said that that system needed to tailor its interventions and policies to an international context where the achievement of the millennium goals on poverty reduction was not compatible with recurring unsustainable external debt crises. The international financial system therefore needed to be coherent and predictable in its approach to crises, in order to deal in a similar fashion with crises in countries with identical debt situations.

66. **Mr. Manis** (Sudan) stressed the importance of the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, which marked a return to multilateral diplomacy, reflecting the wishes of large and small countries, strong and weak, rich and poor, working in tandem for the advancement of all.

67. Those world meetings had been held two years after the Millennium Summit and had followed the Third United Nations Conference on the Least

Developed Countries, the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, the WTO Ministerial Conference in Doha, the General Assembly special sessions on children and on HIV/AIDS, the World Food Summit, and other international meetings. The time had come to translate the resolutions of those conferences into action. That entailed identifying the tasks and resources needed, setting deadlines, and adopting appropriate procedures for precise follow-up and continuous assessments.

68. Poverty would continue to be the greatest challenge facing the world. According to current economic indicators, the number of poor people in the least developed countries would grow to 410 million by 2015. The situation of the least developed countries was particularly acute, with wretched economic and social conditions and increasing marginalization within the globalization process. His delegation called on the international community to help implement the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010.

69. The imbalances existing in the world economy and the increasing gap between rich and poor could be corrected only through an increase in official aid and foreign investments, in addition to external debt relief, open markets, and capacity-building. Without comprehensive foreign assistance, the efforts of the developing countries, their substantial sacrifices and their political and economic reforms would be in vain.

70. His delegation supported the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), and hoped that the final review of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) would reinforce the efforts of the African continent to achieve sustainable development.

71. Given its geographical position at the crossroads of trade routes, the Sudan attached great importance to the International Ministerial Meeting to be held in 2003 concerning landlocked developing countries, and called on the international community to ensure its success.

72. **Mr. Lamba** (Malawi) said that the new multilateralism, the new thinking on how to extricate developing countries from their socio-economic problems, had been endorsed at all the most recent United Nations conferences and summits. The recognition that the policy prescriptions for developing countries had not achieved the expected results should enable multilateral and bilateral partners, together with developing countries, to seek viable alternatives that would place more emphasis on implementation, rather than on endless policy development. The concept of NEPAD was timely; while it drew inspiration from the millennium development goals, it was a purely African initiative. He hoped that Africa's development partners would follow the new thinking in their collaboration with the continent, so that the new multilateralism could be exploited to the advantage of all humanity. Africa remained heavily indebted and the HIPC initiative was crucial to easing the debt burden by releasing much-needed resources for poverty eradication and sustainable human development. There was, however, a need for rapid and full implementation of the HIPC initiative and full funding of the HIPC Trust Fund.

73. However, HIPC alone would not solve Africa's development problems. Africa's share of international trade must increase and its exports, particularly agricultural products, must have greater market access. Least developed countries needed to be fully engaged in the development of trade rules and greater emphasis needed to be placed on the reform and expansion of the international trading system within the framework of WTO. In that regard, developed nations must make good on their commitment to earmark 0.7 per cent of GNP to ensure that the poorest countries were able to participate effectively in and benefit from the global trading system.

74. He appealed to the international community to focus more on the implementation and closer monitoring of action programmes emerging from United Nations conferences and summits on development and on viable and transparent follow-up systems.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.